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HOUSE RESOLUTION 250
By Sargent

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Colonel Hensley Williams, United States Marine Corps, Retired, of Franklin.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Colonel Hensley Williams, United States Marine Corps, Retired; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Hensley Williams bravely and honorably served the citizens of this great State and Nation as a United States Marine during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War; at the time of his death he was the oldest living World War II Fighter Pilot in the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the great-great grandson of Judge John Overton, the builder of Travelers Rest and an important figure in the history of Nashville, Colonel Williams, as a young boy, lived with his family at the historic Travellers Rest; and

WHEREAS, Hensley Williams was a highly regarded student at Vanderbilt University from 1935 to 1937; a sterling scholar, he next attended the United States Naval Academy, where he graduated in the top 10% of his class in 1941; and

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WHEREAS, as a member of the United States Marine Corps, he was initially trained in artillery and bravely fought in Guadalcanal in 1942, before undergoing a year of flight training; and

WHEREAS, during his years of distinguished service as a Fighter Pilot in the U.S. Marine Corps, Colonel Williams flew fifty-two combat missions; he valiantly fought in numerous battles in the Pacific, including Kwajelein, Saipan, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa; and

WHEREAS, a highly respected leader, Colonel Hensley Williams served for thirteen months as the Commanding Officer of a Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron during the Korean War; as a member of the staff of U.S. Commander General Creighton W. Abrams, he commanded four squadrons of F-8 Crusader Fighter Jets in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, after meritoriously serving his fellow citizens as a U.S. Marine for thirty years, he retired with the rank of Colonel in 1971; at this time, he moved to Franklin, where he resided until his death; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Williams dedicated his time and talents to numerous military, veterans and community organizations; he was a valuable member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Marine Aviation Association, the Naval Academy Association, the Middle Tennessee Fighter Pilots Association, the Sons of the American Revolution, the Sons of the Confederacy, the Tennessee and Williamson County Historical Societies, and the Lions Club; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Hensley Williams was a faithful and active member of the First United Methodist Church of Franklin; and

WHEREAS, a man of courage and integrity, who was also well read, Colonel Williams was deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Williams was preceded in death by his wife of fifty years, Josephine Trice Colton Williams, in 1997; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Hensley Williams will be sorely missed by his sons, John Colton and Clay Williams; his seven grandchildren; and his three great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, he leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, Mr. Williams selflessly sacrificed his personal safety and concerns to safeguard liberty and the American way of life; his service in the United States Marine Corps can only be categorized as outstanding, and his bravery under fire was in the finest tradition of the armed forces of our Nation; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this loving husband and father, good neighbor and friend, exemplary military leader and courageous soldier; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor the memory of Colonel Hensley Williams, United State Marine Corps, Retired, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his brave and honorable service to his country as an officer in the United States Marine Corps, his stalwart commitment to his family and community, and the courage and conviction with which he lived.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Colonel Williams.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.